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WASHINGTON, DC (March 23, 2011) – Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) issued the following statement on the first anniversary of President Obama signing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act into law.

“When the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act became law one year ago, we recognized for the first time that health care is a right. We recognized that health care costs should not impoverish individual Americans or cause them personal bankruptcies, and they should not prevent small businesses from being able to prosper.

“The law makes health care affordable for the middle class, provides security for seniors and individuals with disabilities, and guarantees access to health insurance coverage for the uninsured. It finally puts healthcare in the hands of the consumer, not the big insurance companies.

“Today, on the one year anniversary of the Affordable Care Act, we’ve already begun to help residents in Illinois’ 9th Congressional District – and all over the country – get the care they need.

“One of my constituents, David Zoltan-Breiger, is 33 years old and finally has coverage under Illinois’ Pre-Existing Condition Plan, which was created as part of health care reform. David has diabetes, and because of his pre-existing condition he couldn’t get insurance for over two years after losing his job. Now, he no longer has to wait hours in the emergency room to get the life-saving insulin he needs. Without coverage, the ER was his only option.

“A Biology Class at Maine South High School in Park Ridge had it completely right when they wrote to me before the law passed: “It isn’t fair that currently the different health insurance companies are charging so much for coverage. The companies also charge more depending on age, gender, history of health, pre-existing conditions, and sometimes they won’t cover you at all.” They are right; it simply is not fair and it isn’t right. That is exactly why we banned such discrimination with health care reform.

“Our job now is to look forward and strengthen the many protections the law provides, and to build on the framework we created with the Affordable Care Act.

“Unbelievably, Republicans have not only made it their mission to undo the law, they would dismantle one of our country’s most popular, bedrock programs. They would make Medicare a voucher program, essentially giving seniors and people with disabilities a credit toward private insurance – handing millions of customers back to the insurance companies, but without any of the consumer protections.

“We need to keep moving forward to protect Americans’ health care security and to keep pushing costs down. Most importantly, we need to give Americans the choice of getting their

health coverage through a public option. The Congressional Budget Office – a non-partisan rating agency – has estimated that a public option would provide premiums that are, on average, 5-7% lower than private insurance, and would also save the federal government \$88 billion through 2021 – \$15 billion in 2021 alone.

“I say to my Republican colleagues in Congress that Democrats are ready to work with you to improve the law, but on one point we are firm: We will not go backward – Americans cannot afford to lose the health care security the law now provides.”

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Analysis by Democrats in the House Energy & Commerce Committee:

Republicans' efforts to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act would take away important new benefits, increase health care costs for millions of Americans, causing many families to lose coverage, and increase the national debt by over \$1 trillion. Repeal of the health reform law would have significant consequences in the 9th Congressional District of Illinois by:

- Allowing insurance companies to deny coverage to **110,000 to 284,000** individuals, including **7,000 to 31,000** children, with pre-existing conditions.
- Rescinding consumer protections for **402,000** individuals who have health insurance through their employer or the market for private insurance.
- Eliminating health care tax credits for up to **14,100** small businesses and **138,000** families.
- Increasing prescription drug costs for **8,600** seniors who hit the Part D drug “donut hole” and denying new preventive care benefits to **101,000** seniors.
- Increasing the costs of early retiree coverage for up to **9,300** early retirees.
- Eliminating new health care coverage options for **2,300** uninsured young adults.
- Increasing the number of people without health insurance by **44,000** individuals.
- Increasing the costs to hospitals of providing uncompensated care by **\$69** million annually.

For further detail, please visit: <http://democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/index.php?q=news/impact-of-repealing-health-care-reform>